

Dear Senator Lesser and Representative Gilchrist, Ranking Members Senate Seminara and Representative Case, and Distinguished members of the Human services Committee:

My name is Lanelle Gallo and I am a full time speech language pathologist in Farmington CT. My life has changed (for the better) after a harrowing experience with my son. He developed a heroin addiction and my views on "health" have changed as a result of this. He is sober now 8 years, but after all my studies on the brain and how children learn, I now see wellness as a systemic issue.

It is easier to see physical issues as a concern (and this too is real) but mental health is the genesis of it all. Since my experience with my son, I have broken down the barriers of me and "others." I see now that the health of one is my health! I see now that Post Traumatic History is real and that it lives in people's bodies. We need to see and offer mental health to all if we want a healthy society. Health is wealth. Without access to mental health, there will be a continued rise in substance use, as people try to self medicate. We will also see a rise in unplanned pregnancy...and the list goes on (and the unhealthy cycle goes on),

I stated earlier that I work in a school system. I know the value of good mental health and how this is needed for learning. Just as we offer education for all, we need to offer affordable health care for the development of good minds, bodies and hearts.

In the end we are all connected. Let us fight for expanding HUSKY access to all income eligible people, regardless of immigration status. This will meaningfully expand access to the society we all want. Please advance this bill out of the committee in its current form, and champion it in the full legislature.

Thank you for hearing me and for supporting what is OUR best interest,

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